

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**SHIFTING GEARS PROJECT
LAWRENCE**

**INFORMANT: PATRICK W. BUCKLEY
INTERVIEWER: YILDEREY ERDENER
DATE: MAY 23, 1988**

**Y = YILDEREY
P = PATRICK**

SG-LA-T516

Y: So today is May 23rd, (P: 2nd I think) I think 3rd, 23rd. And 1988. (P: In 1988) And I am in Mary Immaculate Nursing Home.

P: Well naturally you are.

Y: Yeah, yeah. And in Lawrence. And my guest is, you name?

P: Patrick Buckley.

Y: Yeah. Can you tell me when were you born?

P: Where was I born? Right in this spot. Somewhere around on this spot.

Y: In Lawrence?

P: Oh yes. (Y: When) 1891. March the 17th.

Y: March, oh.

P: March the 17th, 1891. 97 years old.

Y: You look good though.

P: Yeah, I know it.

Y: So uh, uh, what did you do when you um,(--)

P: Well I worked in the mill. I, I left school at an early age because my folks needed the money. (Y: Yeah) And I was the next one to come out. And I left the school at about the sixth grade, the fifth or sixth grade.

Y: Which school did you go?

P: Saint Mary's.

Y: Oh yeah.

P: [Few words unclear]. It's all gone now, but uh, I had early age. So I went to work at the Arlington Mill for \$5.22 cents a week.

Y: Yeah. How long did you work?

P: Oh, in the mill, I worked in the Arlington Mill until I got a chance to get a job in the city. And I left the Arlington Mill quick, and I got a job in the city for a little more money.

Y: Uh huh, what did you do in the mill?

P: In the mill? (Y: Yeah) Setting bobbins. Bobbin setting, you know, on the machine for the cloth to go around. And on the City Department I, I did all kinds of work.

Y: Yeah. So it was a long time ago. (P: Huh?) It was long time ago that you worked. (P: Oh, that's a long) When did you start working?

P: Oh, that's a long time ago.

Y: Yeah, do you remember when you started working at the mill? I mean what year.

P: When I started? No I don't. I was only.

Y: How old were you?

P: I was only probably, I was only probably about fourteen years old. That's all they'd allow you to go in. And I just got, I don't know how near to fourteen I was, whether I was over or under it. I don't know nothing about it. Because I, my mother needed the money and I went out to help my mother.

Y: Your father was working also?

P: He was dead.

Y: He was dead? (P: yeah) Did you have sisters and brothers?

P: She married another man, but wasn't too good. But that's gone by.

Y: Yeah. I mean did you have brothers and sisters besides you?

P: Yes, I had a brother and sister, but they're all dead. They're all dead now. I'm the only one in the family.

Y: Yeah. So you said you were born in 1891. (P: 1891) And if you let's say, if you started at the age of fourteen it must be then 19 or what, 9(--)

P: [Unclear]

Y: What? 1904, 1905?

P: Something like that. (Y: Yeah) So I don't know. I didn't keep track, you know, all I wanted to do is to get out and get working. And my mother, she was as I said, she was married again. And she needed the money, and she needed the [unclear]. (Y: Right) So I went out and got it, and I stayed with her.

Y: How did your father die so early? Accident?

P: Huh? Well my father, I don't know. He died when I was walking on the floor. (Y: Oh yeah) Crawling on the floor, my father. (Y: Yeah. Yeah.) And I had a, I had a brother and a sister, they died. Well they all died. There's, and I had a couple of step brothers. I had one step brother, and he died. A step sister, they died. But there's a few left. Not sisters, they're cousins, or relatives. I don't know what the hell they are.

Y: Yeah. So anyway, it was more or less eighty years ago you worked at the Arlington Mill?

P: Yeah, I worked in the Arlington. That's the first job I got for \$5.22.

Y: Twenty-two. You remember that though.

P: Oh sure. Oh, no tax. (Y: No tax?) No.

Y: Yeah. And uh, what do you remember from inside of the mill? What, what sticks out (--)

P: Nothing [few words unclear]. Frames and people running around working, setting these bobbins, you know. And setting these bobbins and picking up wool, and sweeping the floor. And [unclear].

Y: Was it loud inside? (P: Huh?) Was it loud inside of the mill? Loud? The machines made a lot of sound?

P: Was it hard? (Y: Yeah?) No. You'd put them on with your fingers. After you get used to it, you put them on with your hands.

Y: Uh huh. And you don't remember how long you worked there, huh? You don't remember?

P: Oh no, no, I don't. I wasn't thinking of the remembrance. I wasn't thinking of getting the money for uh, for my mother. d

Y: So 1905?

P: That'd be way in the 19's. (Y: Right) Yeah, that be way in the 19's.

Y: And uh, you must be then? You must be twenty-one years old when uh, 1912 strike was on?
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P: 21 years old? (Y: Yeah) I don't think so. (Y: No?) I don't know.

Y: Anyway, what do you remember from that time, from the strike?

P: Well I remember they raised hell and broke windows, and uh, (Y: did they?) Oh sure! They brought in the soldiers, put them on the sidewalk and made the people closed the window. If they didn't close the window, they'd shut the window. Oh sure, down Elm Street. Right around the corner here. [Comment unclear] . They mean business, they meant business, and they got it too.

Y: Why did they want the windows shut?

P: They wanted the increase in wage and the hours? They were working 54 hours a week, and they wanted forty-eight hours, with 50 hours pay. And they got it. They got everything they went after. They got everything they went after.

Y: Yeah. Do you know where the strikers get together? (P: Huh?) Where, do you know where did they meet each other, the strikers? Do you know?

P: Well sure they met, they met in the common, they met in the street, they met anywhere. Met in the alley. They'd fight in the alley. There was four or five, four or five murders and two or three murders down there. And a lot of, a lot of trouble, you know? And we, once we got home we stayed at home. And no, we didn't go out at all at night. You didn't there.

Y: Yeah. Did they really kill people? (P: Huh?) Did they really kill?

P: Oh sure they killed people, sure.

Y: Who? I heard just one. A girl whose name was what? Anne [unclear] something.

P: They killed uh, they killed a fellow on Elm, well right around here on Elm Street. Elm Street would be right in back here. (Y: Uh huh) And they killed, they stabbed. Well I don't know whether they stabbed him or what they did, but they killed him anyway. And they went to jail for it. Two strikers, I mean the [unclear] two leaders. They went to, they went to jail. They went right up to the jail here. You see the jail is out here. (Y: Uh huh) It's out here somewhere.

And that's where they, they uh, they put two, two strike leaders up there. I don't know for how long, but they were up there for quite awhile.

Y: The names I got from the books. Uh, Joseph, or Joseph Caruso? (P Who?) Joseph Caruso? Do you recognize that name? One of the leaders?

P: Let me see?

Y: This here, or that name, [Hatter]? Or Gionati, that's Italian guy?

P: Yeah, he was, I think he was one of them. (Y: Which one, Caruso?) Joe Caruso. (Y: Uh huh) I don't know how, I don't know how far he was.

Y: And that was uh, the girl they killed, Annie Lopeze.

P: They killed her. I know they (--)

Y: Did you any stories about it?

P: They got in you know, in the houses at night time drinking, and then you know, a fight started. And one would stab the other, or shoot the other. It didn't make no difference.

Y: But you didn't see that, right?

P: Oh no, I didn't I didn't see that, no.

Y: But what, what stories did you hear about the killing? You said uh, you said they killed more than one. More than any?

P: Oh, I think they, let's see, they killed uh, they killed, I think they killed, but I think there was about three. (Y: Three?) About three I think.

Y: Because they don't mention anyone else in the books. They mention only this girl as far as I read.

P: Yeah, well, yeah, well I don't remember her, because (--)

Y: Who are, who are the other ones?

P: The other one was a man. (Y: A man?) Yeah, they were gambling, or drinking in the place. I don't know what his name was.

Y: Yeah, I mean what you heard. What did you hear about?

P: It was, they were drinking you know, fighting. And the first thing you know, they laid him low. They killed him. (Y: Italian, or?) Oh sure they killed him. They'd kill you in a minute [few words unclear].

Y: So did you participate, did you march on the streets also?

P: Did I what?

Y: Did you march? Did you uh(--)

P: No, no, I kept away from it. (Y: You did not) My mother, my mother wouldn't let me go near it. She was afraid I'd get hurt, which I was.

Y: And what is your ethnic background? Are you Irish? Are you (--)

P: I'm Irish, yeah. (Y: Are you?) Yeah.

Y: And your father came here uh (--)

P: Yeah, he came from the old country, yeah. My mother did too.

Y: But you were born here in Lawrence?

P: Hi. Anything you want me for? (Female voice: No, I just wanted the tray)

Y: So he came from Ireland, your father?

P: Yeah, my father.

Y: And mother was also Irish?

P: Yup. Both fathers. The step father came from Ireland too.

Y: Oh I see, yeah. And uh, what do you, what did you hear? As I said, these were 80 years ago. I don't remember what I did yesterday. So uh, I know, what did you hear about Father O'Rally, O'Reilly, or (--)

P: Oh well, they called him every name. They called him an Anarchist, and they called him, I think they called everything, but he did, he went down the street just as brave as ever. There's pictures in the, well it was only last, as couple of weeks ago, there was a paper here with a picture of him, Father O'Reilly walking down the street with a permit, and he dared anybody to take it off him. (Y: Uh huh) And they didn't take it off him either. They were down there on the corner of Essex and Lawrence street. So they, a couple of weeks ago it was in the paper.

Y: Was he against the strike, or for the strike?

P: Oh, they were all gangsters. They were (--) You know, they were all, they were all gangsters that came here to run the strike and get the money. You know, they didn't give a damn. Two, two of them landed in jail. And I think there was a woman landed in jail too. (Y: Yeah?) That's so long ago, you know.

Y: Yeah, yeah, I mean what was the role of Father O'Rally? (P: the what?) Father O'Rally? How do you say his name? O'Rally?

P: O'Reilly, yeah. (Y: What did he do?) He was the pastor. He was the boss of Saint Mary's Parish. (Y: Uh huh) A good one too.

Y: It was, he was good?

P: He was a good one too. They, they didn't talk to him. He told them what they were. Oh no, they watched him. They didn't leave him get hurt.

Y: Yeah. And um, I heard that he was active in the strike. He was not for the strike, but he was against the strike. Did you hear anything like that?

P: No, no. (Y: No?) What's all this about anyway?

Y: Well this is a, there are not many people who remember details about 1912. I mean you are one of the luckiest people who remember those things. I mean most of the people say, I don't remember anything. And uh, did you hear about Peter, what's his name? Peter Carr?

P: He was the Alderman, like Commissioner of Safety. Yeah, I know him too. (Y: You know him?) Yeah. He's all right. He only died a few years ago.

Y: Oh yeah? What kind of person was he?

P: He's uh, he was in office for quite awhile as Alderman.

Y: I mean his role in this strike was what? To(--) (P: Huh?) What was his role in the strike? Peter Carr, what did he do? What was his uh (--)

P: He was the Alderman? (P: Oh?) You know, like uh, like any Alderman of the city.

Y: Oh yeah.

P: Like the Mayor and then, you know, he was like them?

Y: How do you know him?

P: Oh, everybody knew him. He would be going around looking for votes. Yeh.

Y: Yeah. And uh (--)

P: Yeah, what I mean, I don't, actually I don't really don't know too much, that much about, that much about the 1912 strike. (Y: Yeah) Because we never went out. We stayed in the house. And we never went out until, because well you couldn't go out. Soldiers were walking up and down the sidewalk. And if they saw you in the street, they'd say, get in. Get in the house. [Unclear] They couldn't go to work in certain any other city. Some of them sneaked out to go in the city, but it didn't do them any good.

Y: Did you go, could you go and work in Arlington Mill? Oh, you did not work at that time at the mill?

P: No, no, I was in, but I was working, I think I was working on the city at that time. I don't know. It's so long ago it's hard to remember.

Y: And what about, I men these people were, they were not rich the workers, you know, the mill workers? (P: The mills) Yeah, they were not rich, and how did they survive?

P: Well they, they got by as far as I know. I wouldn't know.

Y: I mean friends and relatives did you see around your home?

P: What are you going to do with this story? Are you going the print all of this story, or what?

Y: Some of them, yeah, not all of them. If you are worried, I mean if you are concerned, you know, we can stop.

P: Yeah, well I don't want too much of it. I forgot all about it. They forgot all about it, and I want to forget all about it. So I just assume that they, nothing is said about it in the paper or anything.

Y: No, I'm not going to print it in the newspaper. (P: Huh?) So the tape is on now? Okay? (P: Huh?) The tape is on. I'm recording what you tell me now. How many hours did you work? Do you remember? (P: In the mill?) Yeah. One day, when did you start?

P: Oh, I couldn't tell you that. (Y: No?) I don't know. I forget all of that time.

R: Right. And did you have lunch break, do you remember that?

P: No. Lunch break, you're lucky you got out of there at six o'clock. (Y: Yeah) No, no. No, as I said, I'm the only one in the family left, and I just assume drop the whole damn thing, you know?

Y: Umhm. Okay. Well it's (--) You know, I didn't want to talk too long to you, because I didn't want to make you tired. So I appreciate whatever you tell me, told me.

P: Yeah, well that's all right. That's about all I can tell you, all I know.

Y: Yeah, thank you very much.

P: Because they had to go in, they had to go in the house.

Y: Yeah.

P: You had to stay in the house. (Y: Uh huh) If you went outside you're liable to get shot. Soldiers were climbing up on the sidewalk. They didn't climb on the road, they crawled on the sidewalk. Sometimes they made two or three across to climb the road. What can you do?

Y: Where did you live at that time? In uh (--)

P: Down at the other end of the city somewhere. The city is all changed.

Y: Yeah. Can you tell me about the changes? You know, changes took place since uh (--)

P: Well you know, (--) Did you see what they did here? There was nothing here but all houses. This place, for this hospital. There was a few, there was a few open fields, but, to ride around, but they were no, they were no good. They tore them all down. They tore down a big orphan home a built this place. But uh (--)

Y: Do you remember the first car you saw?

P: Huh?

Y: The first car? Do you remember? When did you see the first car on this street?

P: I don't know what you mean?

Y: Car? Automobile? You know the car, C A R? Car. When did you see it. It was uh, do you remember when it was? Did it make any impression on you to see the first car rolling on the street?

P: No, I couldn't tell. (Y: Yeah) As I told you before, I forgot, I forgot all about the damn thing. And this is as much as I talked about it now. And when you got out of here, I'm going to forget the whole damn thing again. (Y: Umhm) Because it was a bad thing, and everybody suffered. So did I, and so did everybody else. (Y: Yeah) And they had a hard time. And I just assume forget it.

Y: Forget it, yeah. Yeah. Well I guess that is the best approach, you know? That is the best thing to do? (P: sure) Just forget it.

P: I want to forget it.

Y: Yeah.

P: I'm the only one left in the family, and I just assume forget all about it. I might go in the morning, who knows? But I did that for him, you know, because uh, I knew him you know, and my son knows him. I sit there, you know, I don't want to talk about no more about 1912. It was only a couple of days, weeks ago, the whole, the whole paper here at nighttime, Saturday and Sunday, were full of the same thing. (Y: Yeah) Well there's a good story. You could have got that if you had to get that paper.

Y: Well uh, I have those other books, but uh,(--)

P: Huh?

Y: I have also books which talk about that, but uh, I was interested to know what uh (--)

P: Well that's about all. (Y: Uh huh) We couldn't tell you anything, because as I told you, they wouldn't let us out. Boy, we didn't want to go and get shot.

Y: Yeah, yeah. Anyway, thank you very much.

P: You're welcomed, but (--)

end of tape.